



# INTERCOM

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## CENTER DIRECTOR'S HOLIDAY MESSAGE

As the holidays approach and the year draws to an end, I wanted to thank all of you for your hard work and dedication throughout what has sometimes been a challenging year.

We embarked on a significant journey during 2004 with the evolution of the new Air Traffic Organization. Though this hasn't been an easy process, I believe it is a necessary one to ensure the future of the organization. So, I'm asking for your continued support and cooperation as we continue our journey during 2005 and beyond.

It's also important, during this special time of year, to take a few moments from the hustle and bustle of the holidays to appreciate family and friends and their contributions to our day-to-day success. I would also ask each of you to remember the men and women who are risking their lives overseas in the fight against terrorism.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish each of you a happy holiday season, filled with joy and delight. I look forward to seeing you in 2005 and working together toward a prosperous future.

HAVE A MOST BLESSED  
HOLIDAY SEASON AND A VERY  
HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW  
YEAR!!!

*Anne Harlan*

## Center Celebrates the Holidays in a "Winter Wonderland"

By Maudie M. Powell and Bobby Nichols



*Santa and Mrs. Claus say thank you to co-chairs Maudie Powell and Bobby Nichols for this year's "Winter Wonderland" celebration.*

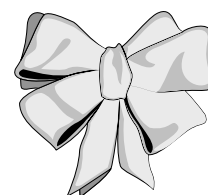
There is nothing like having your own "Winter Wonderland" to get you in the spirit of the holiday season. So the talent and commitment of the Technical Center Holiday Celebration Planning Committee (especially **Lana Haug** as decorations subcommittee chair) and many volunteers created a "Winter Wonderland" setting in the Building 300 atrium for the December 8 celebration. It was a holiday place for enjoying time filled with "food, fun, and fellowship."

Acting Senior Corporate Officer, **Ron Esposito**, represented **Dr. Anne Harlan**, Center Director and the entire management team as he extended a warm welcome and remarks to all Technical Center Federal and contractor employees.

Co-chairs **Maudie Powell** (delegate for Program Director, **Annie Clark**,

Office of Enterprise Performance) and **Bobby Nichols** (delegate for Acting Managing Program Director, **Shelley Yak**, Office of Operations, Technology and Acquisition) want to thank all who helped plan, create and serve for this holiday event, including the many committee members, volunteers and **Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus**. Special thanks to **Bernice Benitez** who served as special assistant for the entire event.

A universal wish is extended that all will experience love, joy, and peace this holiday season and throughout the New Year.



## HO! HO! HO!

By Stan Ciurczak

The Santa Hotline will be up and running on December 24, Christmas Eve. You can call **485-6000**, beginning at 4:00 p.m. that day. Callers will be able to select from several options as Santa circumnavigates the world. The options correlate with the beginning, middle and end of Santa's trip. The best part is the final option, which tells the kids they had better get to bed pronto, if they want Santa to stop at their house.

FAA Airport Operations has been providing this service for the Tech Center community, in conjunction with the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), for many years. NORAD has been tracking Santa's progress, and guaranteeing his safety, for 50 years.

It's easy to see how a jolly sleigh driver and nine reindeer, rocketing through international airspace without a filed flight plan, could easily ride

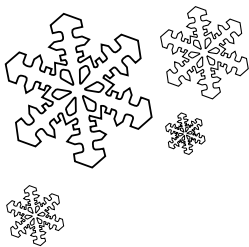
into danger. There is no reason to worry, though, because NORAD and its predecessor - the Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD) - have been on duty since 1955 on Christmas Eve.

Santa-tracking began when the telephone number for a Santa hotline, which was misprinted in a Sears Roebuck ad, put a number of kids eager to talk to the man in red through to a hotline for CONAD's commander-in-chief of operations. A team of volunteers today runs the operation from Cheyenne Mountain and Peterson Air Force Base.

Santa doesn't tell the FAA where he plans to fly (it varies each year), so NORAD must identify all 'unknown' Christmas objects on the radar screen. About 22,300 miles above the Earth, rings of satellites keep an eye out for the kind of infrared heat given-off by a missile, rocket

or jet aircraft. This satellite 'Defense Support Program' is backed-up by ground-based sensors that do the rest of the work by accurately tracking any contacts potentially threatening North America. The glow from Rudolph's nose is so bright that it can be detected by the infrared satellite system, according to NORAD insiders. Two Canadian CF-18 jets, replete with scanners and digital camera technology, are deployed in far northern Canada to verify that the objects being tracking are, in fact, Santa, Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen and Rudolph.

NORAD notes "the pilots are still surprised to this day to see a smiling, jolly little man in red waving to them from an open sleigh in the middle of a snow storm."



*Happy  
Holidays!*

